(c) the steps Government propose to take to safeguard the interests of the forest dwellers?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) The data pertaining to the number of families evicted from forests is maintained by the concerned State/Union Territory Government.

(c) The Ministry of Environment and forests has issued guidelines on 18.09.1990 under the Forests (Conservation) Act, 1980 for grant of traditional rights of forest dwellers over forest land. Under these guidelines, about 3.66 lakh hectares of encroachment of forest land has been regularised and 511 forest villages have been converted into revenue villages. This process could not be continued further due to the ban imposed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India on de-reservation of forest land as well as regularisation of encroachment. The Ministry is pursuing the matter with the Hon'ble Court to obtain a suitable modification in the orders so that grant of traditional rights over forest land could be continued further under the forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

The Ministry of Environment and Forests has also requested all the State/Union Territory Governments not to resort to eviction of forest dwellers other than ineligible encroachers of forest land till complete survey is carried out for recognition of such people and their rights over forest land as provided in the guidelines dated 18.09.1990 issued under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. The Ministry has also issued detailed revised guidelines on 03.11.2005 for verification/recognition of such rights over forest land and has requested the State/Union Territory Government to complete the process.

Poaching of tigers

2632. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that three poachers have admitted that they killed at least 22 tigers in Ranthambore since 2003 right under the nose of 273 forest staff that guard India's most famous tiger reserve;

(b) whether it is a fact that these poachers had free access to the forests and they even travelled by jeep; and

(c) if so, whether Government have done any investigation in this matter and the action proposed theron?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c): Information in this regard is being collected form the State and would be laid on the table of the House.

Rejuvenation camps for elephants in Tamil Nadu

2633. SHRI C. PERUMAL:
DR. K. MALAISAMY:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government, as one of the steps towards conservation of wild life, have got a scheme of running rejuvenation camps for elephants as done in Tamil Nadu at Mudumalai Wild Life Sanctuary; and

(b) if not, whether they would follow suit in other parts of the country, pariticularly, when the scheme in Tamil Nadu is a good success drawing world wide attention and recognition besides appreciation all over?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) There is no such scheme of Government of India of running rejuvention camps for elephants.

(b) The programme of running rejuvenation camps for elephants is being implemented by State Government of Tamil Nadu under their own scheme. There is no proposal of Government of India to run such schemes in other parts of the country.

Water pollution at Pali

2634. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware about the Pali, a textile town in Rajasthan which is water-scarce State;

(b) whether Government are also aware about the filth it produces hampering crops around;